

REMARKS

The undersigned would again like to extend his appreciation for the interview kindly extended the Examiner. During the interview, the prior art rejections were discussed along with proposed amendments. In particular, it was pointed out that the prior art does not teach a shutter having an upstream surface flush with the upstream surface of the cutting blade. The Examiner generally agreed, but suggested further revision of the claims to clarify that the upstream surface of the shutter that is flush with the upstream surface of the cutting blade engaged the end of the dunnage strip when the moving blade was in its extended position. The independent claims have been amended accordingly and are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early indication to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should a petition for an Extension of Time be necessary for the timely reply to the outstanding Office Action (or if such a petition has been made and an additional extension is necessary) petition is hereby made and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees (including additional claim fees) to Deposit Account No. 18-0988, Order No. RANPP0305USA.

Respectfully submitted,

RENNER, OTTO, BOISSELLE & SKLAR, LLP

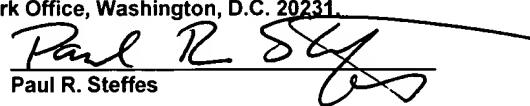
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I hereby certify that this correspondence (along with any paper referenced as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited on the date shown below with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, D.C. 20231.

Dated: March 18, 2003


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Amendments to the Claims

1-3. (canceled).

4. (currently amended) A cushioning conversion machine for converting sheet stock material into a cushioning dunnage product, comprising
a stock supply assembly which supplies stock material to be converted,
a conversion assembly which draws the stock material from the stock supply and converts the stock material into a strip of cushioning, and
a severing assembly for severing the strip of cushioning to form a pad,
the severing assembly including
a moving blade mounted for movement across a strip path between a retracted position and an extended position for cutting the strip, and
a shutter movable with the moving blade for substantially blocking the strip path when the moving blade is in its extended position, wherein the shutter has an upstream surface flush with an upstream surface of the moving blade, and the upstream surface of the shutter is positioned to engage a downstream end of the strip when the moving blade is in its extended position.

5. (canceled)

6. (original) A conversion machine as set forth in claim 4, wherein the shutter and moving blade are both mounted to a blade holder.

7. (original) A conversion machine as set forth in claim 6, wherein the blade holder is mounted for swinging movement relative to another blade that coacts with the moving blade to cut the strip.

8-10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) A conversion method for converting sheet stock material into a cushioning dunnage product, comprising drawing sheet stock material

from a stock supply, converting the stock material into a strip of cushioning, and cutting the strip of cushioning using a moving blade to cut the strip of cushioning across a strip path between a retracted position and an extended position, wherein a shutter is moved in trailing relation to the moving blade wherein an upstream surface of the shutter is flush with an upstream surface of the moving blade and the upstream surface of the shutter smoothly slides along a downstream end of the strip of cushioning and engages the downstream end of the strip when the moving blade is in its extended position, for substantially blocking the strip path when the moving blade is in its extended position, thereby to prevent movement of a cut end of the strip from moving behind the moving blade as the moving blade slices through the strip of cushioning.

12. (cancelled) A conversion method as set forth in claim 11, wherein the cut end of the strip of cushioning smoothly slides along upstream side surfaces of the moving blade and shutter.

13. (previously added) A conversion machine as set forth in claim 4, wherein the moving blade and shutter are separate components having common movement.

14. (previously added) A conversion machine as set forth in claim 4, further including a second blade with which the moving blade coacts to sever the strip of cushioning.

15. (previously added) A conversion machine as set forth in claim 14, wherein the second blade is a stationary blade.